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Plans in Motion

by Aurumite

Summary

Bad Timeline, but before things go awry.

Robin is delighted with his new family and wants to add one more. Now he just has to run the idea by his wife.

Notes

I couldn't decide how to make this cohesive, so here! A huge mish-mash of babies and Mother!Maribelle and fluff and some IMPENDING SAD but no real sad. I hope it's ok!

See the end of the work for more notes

“Maribelle?”

“Yes, darling.”

She doesn't even say it like a question. Robin watches her carefully, from the floor where he's helping Brady stack his new wooden blocks. She is perched on the impeccably brushed velvet sofa, one heavy book of law held to her nose and another on her lap. The nightgown she's wearing is long and modest but very soft and touchable. Versatile to any mood she might be in on any given night.

“What about another?” he asks.

“If you eat too much chocolate, you're going to get fat. I won't abide it.”

“No. Not chocolate.” Despite the tempting dish on the polished oak table between them, still piled high. He'd only had a couple after dinner, mostly as his Father Reward for feeding one to Brady and getting chocolate drool all over his shirt. He pulls their son into his lap. He is a pretty gangly two-year-old, even with his chubby cheeks and wrists. He'll be really tall someday.

“Whatever do you mean, then? I don't exactly have the time for games, you know. My case is tomorrow morning.”

“I mean another.” He holds Brady out toward her. Though being several feet and a wide, glass-crowned coffee table away, Brady holds his arms out for her. He's always been a Mama's Boy. Maribelle snaps her book shut, the only indication that she's tempted to reach out for Brady, too.

“I liked this proposition better the first time you presented it,” she says.

Robin grins at the memory: a ball to commemorate Chrom's return to Ylisse and the end of the war. Lissa's pregnancy was also announced. It was such a shocking joy for Robin, who'd come to see her as his sister. So much that unlike usual formal occasions, he didn't spend it tugging at his collar and complaining with Chrom. He put to use the intensive month of dance lessons that Maribelle had forced him through in their parlour each evening, so that he could “behave like a gentleman” when the occasion came.

It was foolish, he knew as he swept her onto the floor. She was trying to focus on her career, and everything he knew before the day he took Chrom's hand was well and truly gone. Perhaps he had been married, in another life. Perhaps he had gone through all of this already. Perhaps, as a man who couldn't even say where he'd come from, he didn't deserve to take on the new responsibilities he hoped for. He didn't know. All he knew was how much he wanted his future with this woman. She matched him in wit despite his lofty position as an Exalt's tactician, she always found new things to teach him despite his propensity to live in libraries, and she was looking at him with such coy adoration that he couldn't help himself. He lifted their joined hands as they spun and brushed his lips over her knuckles far more sensually than he knew should be allowed, and he murmured,

What about a child of our own?

She'd nearly dragged him from the ballroom.

But this time, she is experienced. She stays poised on the couch, watching him the way he expects a cat watches a mouse coming out of its hole.

“What brings this on, Robin?” she asks.

Brady starts to squirm and fuss in his lap, so he lets him go. Meets Maribelle's eyes. Stands.

“I can't really explain it,” he says. “Sometimes I just don't feel...tethered. It was how I used to feel all the time, before I met you. Marrying you was the best thing that ever happened to me. It gave me a home, a place in life, and not just something I was borrowing from Chrom. And having Brady just made that stronger. Having Brady has been so good.”

“Brady good,” Brady repeats from the floor, overhearing some of the many words he's starting to pick up.

“Brady *is* good,” Maribelle says, both correction and praise.

“But I'm starting to feel a little...I don't know. *Off*, again.”

Maribelle delicately pats the spot on the couch next to her. He sinks down with a sigh.

“Love,” he says, “I still can't remember anything. *Anything*. And the headaches are getting more frequent.”

“Perhaps you should stop trying so hard to remember,” she says.

“What am I going to tell him when he asks about his other grandparents? When I'm probably Plegian, so he's probably half, but I have nothing of the culture to give him? What if he asks how old I am? What if someday we're out and somebody recognizes me, and I don't remember them, and this whole thing gets hashed out before his eyes?”

Maribelle does not often drop her eyes, but she does this time.

“I'm sorry,” she murmurs. “I did not realize it was so hard for you.”

He takes one of the hands folded so neatly in her lap. “I'm glad to hear it. I've been trying not to worry you.”

“I do not like to be kept ignorant.”

“I'm just taking a leaf out of your book. You're always so strong. No matter what you go through, you just bottle it up and focus on helping other people.”

He starts to stroke the back of her hand. She leans her head on his shoulder, something she also rarely does in fear of ruining her curls.

“I would still like to know,” she said. “In the future. If you please.”

It's not a request. Robin chuckles and kisses the top of her head. “All right. But only if you stay open with me, too.”

“We'll see.”

I love you, he wants to murmur, although the moment isn't right and she would scoff at him for blurting such a thing out of the blue. She is so independent, so self-reliant, and though he isn't really a subservient person, he feels he should always scramble to be worthy of her. He drags his fingers up her back, over the soft material of her nightgown, until his fingertips could ghost over the nape of her neck.

“Again,” she says primly as she re-opens her book, “my case is tomorrow morning.”

“Yes, love.” He presses a kiss beneath her ear anyway.

Brady suddenly begins to bawl. Maribelle is off the couch in an instant, on her knees and scooping him up.

“You are the fussiest child I've ever met. I do hope you grow out of this. Use your words, my duck!”

Brady just wails and points.

“I'm not sure if he knows that word, yet,” says Robin, spotting the problem. He slips off his seat

too to join his family on the floor. He takes a moment to inspect one of the blocks, which has a splintery crack, and holds it out to Brady. “Broken. It's *broken*.”

Brady cries harder about it.

“And we just bought those, too,” Maribelle says with a scowl. “Selling broken wares; of all the nerve. I knew we should have had Lissa's husband just make us a set, instead.”

“I think Lon'qu prefers to be called by his name instead of 'Lissa's husband.'”

Maribelle only shrugs and goes back to tending to Brady. “It's all right. You have the Spark, my love. One day Mother will teach you to fix all sorts of broken things.”

“Like this!” Robin holds out his arm helpfully. Brady eyes them both but subsides into hiccups, sensing that perhaps nothing was the matter after all. “I broke this thing really badly. But Mother fixed it right up.”

“Hurt?” Brady asks fearfully.

“No. Thanks to her, it doesn't hurt at all.”

Brady pats his forearm gingerly, just in case.

“Perhaps it's bedtime if you're this cranky, hm?” Maribelle asks. She stands gently with him, and Robin follows.

Nothing helps him feel more grounded than that nighttime ritual. Putting Brady in the bath (“What's this?” “Nose.” “What's this?” “Tummy.”), combing his hair (white-blond at birth and now golden as Maribelle's, although whether it would ever settle into Robin's colour was up for debate), reading him a book (both parents insisted on literacy), tucking him into bed. He cries a little bit again because he'll miss them in the night, and Maribelle will be gone in the morning, but settles quickly.

Robin loves the routine, loves his son, loves the way the darkness of his and Maribelle's room closes around them like a warm blanket when she shuts the door.

“I have a secret,” she whispers, chin tilted haughtily, eyes gleaming from the moonlight in the windows.

“I thought we were going to be open with each other.” Robin pulls her close and kisses her gently.

“You didn't have a particular time in mind for this second child, did you? Two years from now, for example? Five?”

“I suppose not. I needed your permission before I could formulate any plans.”

“Well, while you *formulate*, Master Tactician, just keep in mind that they're already on their way.”

She wants shock and elation from him. He can only chuckle and press his lips to hers again and then his brow to hers instead while he catches his breath. “Oh, Maribelle.”

“You cad! You already knew! How? I demand you tell me!”

“You eat the chocolate in that bowl in the parlour during your cycle. But the bowl is still full. It has been for two months. I'm the only one eating it.”

“Ooh!” She growls a little and shoves his chest; he laughs and catches her hands. “It feels like

you're always a step ahead!”

“I'm merely alongside you! You just don't know the feeling because no one else can manage it.” He brings her fingers to his mouth to kiss. “I had to pay attention. Make sure you were open to the possibility before I brought it up.”

“Well, now you know.”

“And I'm so glad.”

He hugs her tightly, and Maribelle hugs back with all her might.

End Notes

OK so bear with me about this bad timeline thing. I'm running on headcanon because the plot of this game makes literally the most zero sense. (If Robin kills Chrom right after they defeat Validar, it means Lucina's a two-year-old alone at the castle and that his wife hasn't even had their second kid yet. Maybe she's pregnant, but even so, how could Lucina learn Chrom's fighting style if he was dead? How would she have such deep attachments to parents she can't even remember because they left to fight a war immediately after her birth? And most importantly, if Chrom is already dead and all the Shepherds were with Robin in that battle and were presumably killed because (guess who's back; back again) Grima's back and possessing Robin, who the heck is leading the army to stop Grima? The war the kids are fighting would've been over before any of them turned three.)

So here's my headcanon. Everyone returns home. Everything is lovely. Everybody has kids. Initially Robin is part of the happy, happy group. But over time, he starts feeling weirder and weirder. Like something just isn't right. Like there's something missing or wrong with him. (Surprise! It's Grima.) So he keeps trying to root himself more firmly in life, only to have an evil dragon force him through a nervous breakdown, possess him fully in his weakness, and peace out for the Table to resurrect him. If we're being real he probably tried to kill his family first, but the kids survived so I guess that didn't happen. And ain't nobody gonna hit Maribelle and survive, dark god or no.

BUT IT'S OK. This plays out again in the good timeline, just with adult!Brady and adult!Morgan there for added shenanigans, and that time everything turns out perfect and THE FAMILY IS EVEN BIGGER.

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